

**CLERK'S SUMMARY AND OFFICIAL MINUTES  
MAYOR'S MENTAL HEALTH TASK FORCE  
MENTAL HEALTH DIVERSION  
SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING  
DECEMBER 21, 2005**

The Mental Health Diversion Subcommittee of the Miami-Dade County Mayor's Mental Health Task Force (MMHTF) met in the Stephen P. Clark Government Center, Conference Room 18-2, 111 N.W. First Street, Miami, Florida at 10:14 a.m. on December 21, 2005, there being present Co-Chairman Jack Lowell and Co-Chairwoman Miami-Dade County Commissioner Natacha Seijas; and Subcommittee members Ms. Nadia Salibi, representing Ms. Sonya Albury, Health Council of South Florida; Mr. Tim Coffey, Assistant Mental Health Project Coordinator, Eleventh Judicial Circuit Criminal Mental Health Project; Ms. Janet Krop, representing South Florida State Hospital; Ms. Judy Rosenbaum, Field Office Manager, Medicaid Program Office – Area 11; Mr. Mark Buchbinder, Alliance for Human Services; Honorable Steve Leifman, Associate Administrative Judge, Eleventh Judicial Circuit of Florida; Ms. Diana Salinas, Baker Act Compliance Officer, Jackson Memorial Hospital, representing Mr. Stuart Podolnick; Mr. Wilson Washington, Vice-President, CHI; Dr. Joseph Poitier, Chief Psychiatrist, Miami-Dade County Corrections and Rehabilitation Department; Mr. Mario Jardon, Citrus Health Network; Assistant County Attorney Valda Clark Christian and Deputy Clerk Judy Marsh.

Also present were Mr. Eduardo Astigarraga, Division Chief, Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation; Mr. Steven Poole, Florida Department of Children and Families, General Services; Mr. Daniel J. Alfonso, Office of Strategic Business Management; Mr. Leland Salomon, Chief, Real Estate Development for General Services; Assistant Public Defender Robin Bengochea, representing Ms. Jill Sperling; Ms. Maria Robau, Project Manager, Mayor's Mental Health Task Force, Office of the Mayor and Mr. John Kowal, Consumer Advocate.

**I. Welcome and introductions**

Co-Chairman Lowell called the Mental Health Diversion Subcommittee meeting to order at 10:14 a.m. He requested the Subcommittee members and additional participants present at today's meeting introduce themselves.

**II. Overview of activities of the Mental Health Facility Workgroup 2002-2005**

Co-Chairman Lowell provided an overview of the Subcommittee's activities. He noted the Subcommittee would discuss the individuals to be served at the proposed mental health diversion facility, their needs, and the condition of the facility.

### **III. Review of Grand Jury recommendations relating to development of a diversion facility**

Honorable Steve Leifman, Associate Administrative Judge, Eleventh Judicial Circuit of Florida, discussed the proposed mental health diversion facility. In 2005, the Miami-Dade County Grand Jury issued a report recommending a facility be constructed to treat and provide services, in one location, to defendants with mental illnesses who were in custody awaiting trial. Judge Leifman noted the conditions in the Miami-Dade County Jail were not conducive to treating these individuals, and often exacerbated their mental health conditions. The services to be provided within the proposed diversion facility included a Crisis Stabilization Unit (CSU), which would serve to provide brief intensive treatment services to defendants in acute psychiatric crisis; a Short-term Residential Treatment (SRT) program, which would promote ongoing recovery and treatment gains subsequent to being discharged from the CSU; a Florida Assertive Community Treatment (FACT) Team, which would provide services to individuals at high risk for non-compliance with treatment following discharge; a Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) training program, and other programs which would address the comprehensive needs of individuals served across the continuum. He noted \$22 million from the General Obligation Bond would be used to acquire the facility.

### **IV. Program Requirements**

The Subcommittee discussed the programs and services that would be administered within the proposed diversion facility, and potential agencies that could be co-located within the facility.

Ms. Judy Rosenbaum, Field Office Manager, Medicaid Program Office – Area 11, recommended the Subcommittee address services to be provided to individuals enrolled in Medicaid, as well as non-Medicaid eligible individuals.

Mr. Mario Jardon, Citrus Health Network, suggested that a primary care component be included in the services to be offered at the proposed diversion facility. He also suggested that space be provided for the Miami-Dade Housing, Vocational Rehabilitation and the Public Defender's Office at the proposed facility.

Judge Leifman suggested that space could also be provided for Legal Services.

Responding to the suggestion from Mr. Mark Buchbinder that space be provided at the proposed diversion facility for case management services, Mr. Jardon said case management services were included in the clinical programs to be provided at the facility. Judge Leifman spoke in support of Mr. Buchbinder's comments that someone who was familiar with the housing options in the community be located at the proposed diversion facility. He suggested that an office to oversee the housing component be located at the facility.

In response to Mr. John Kowal's inquiry, Judge Leifman said the provision of interim assistance to consumers awaiting federal benefits would be addressed.

Responding to Ms. Janet Krop, Judge Leifman said immigration-related issues were considered. He suggested that a legal office be located within the proposed diversion facility that could be shared with the Public Defender, Legal Services and the Immigration Advocacy Center.

## **V. Operating requirements for new facility**

The Subcommittee discussed the agency that would be responsible for operation of the proposed diversion facility and coordination with the various entities operating in the facility.

Judge Leifman suggested that operation of the Crisis Stabilization Unit (CSU) and the Short-term Residential Treatment (SRT) facility be a state-funded function and the forensic aspect of the jail facility be funded through the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. He noted the importance of all entities that would be utilizing the proposed facility participating in its development. Judge Leifman said a consultant who had extensive experience in developing facilities similar to the proposed diversion facility was identified to assess the existing building currently occupied by the South Florida Evaluation and Treatment Center (SFETC) and to make recommendations on how this building could be designed to meet the needs of the proposed diversion facility.

Mr. Tim Coffey, Assistant Mental Health Project Coordinator, Eleventh Judicial Circuit Criminal Mental Health Project, said the consultant, Dr. Joel Dvoskin, was a clinical psychologist, who was involved with the preparation of the Request for Proposals (RFP) for the privatization of the SFETC facility.

Co-Chairman Lowell said the recommendations made at today's Subcommittee meeting would be included within the matrix outlining the program requirements and operating considerations. He suggested that in subsequent meetings, the Subcommittee identify the relationships and the operating groups so they could be involved in the process.

Ms. Rosenbaum suggested that the Agency for Persons with Disabilities be involved in development of the proposed diversion facility.

In response to comments by Dr. Joseph Poitier regarding the inmates who would be diverted to the proposed diversion facility, Judge Leifman said procedures would have to be established and developed in conjunction with the Courts, the State Attorney's Office, the Public Defender's Office, and the Department of Corrections.

Discussion ensued among the Subcommittee members regarding the role of the Crisis Stabilization Units (CSUs).

Judge Leifman said that a separate subcommittee of the Mayor's Mental Health Task Force was looking at the function of the CSUs, how they related to each other, and to the entire mental health system.

Co-Chairman Lowell suggested that Subcommittee members e-mail recommendations on issues relating to the proposed diversion facility's operations requirements.

**VI. Overview of a proposed location, currently occupied by South Florida Evaluation and Treatment Center (SFETC), and findings from property condition assessment**

The Subcommittee discussed the potential acquisition of the South Florida Evaluation and Treatment Center (SFETC) which would be utilized to house, treat, and provide social services in one location to defendants with mental illnesses who were in custody awaiting trial.

Mr. Leland Salomon, Chief, Real Estate Development for General Services Administration (GSA), summarized the property condition assessments conducted for SFETC. Mr. Salomon said an initial physical evaluation report of the SFETC indicated no major issues with the building, however, repairs to the existing facility, excluding potential renovations was approximately \$1.5 million to \$2 million. He noted from a physical standpoint, the facility was manageable and within the budgets of the General Obligation Bond (GOB).

Mr. Salomon said a Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment indicated a potential environmental concern regarding an underground storage tank which was removed. Mr. Salomon noted an initial asbestos report indicated nothing major within the SFETC; however, an assessment would need to be conducted on areas that were inaccessible during the initial testing. Overall, from a physical standpoint, the facility was in good condition, Mr. Salomon said. He noted additions to the facility might be feasible and this would require additional due diligence on the origin of the property. Mr. Salomon said while the GSA would probably not have a problem with conducting the maintenance of the physical building, other County agencies would be better qualified to address the programmatic issues.

Judge Leifman suggested that a tour of the facility be conducted.

Co-Chairman Lowell welcomed Miami-Dade County Commissioner Natacha Seijas, District 13, and Co-Chairwoman of the Mental Health Diversion Subcommittee.

**VII. Timeline for privatization of SFETC & vacancy of existing facility**

The Subcommittee discussed the timeline for privatization of the South Florida Evaluation and Treatment Center (SFETC).

In response to Co-Chairman Lowell's inquiry regarding the timeframe for GSA to prepare a renovation plan for the proposed diversion facility, Mr. Leland Salomon said a budgeted item would have to be prepared for the County Commission's approval.

Responding to Ms. Judy Rosenbaum, Mr. Coffey said he had received approval from the Office of Strategic Business Management to begin using the \$22 million from the General Obligation Bond (GOB) funds to hire a consultant. He noted the consultant identified to make recommendations on the proposed diversion facility would be available after January 1, 2006. Mr. Coffey said he would forward a copy of the consultant's credentials to the Subcommittee members and participants.

Commissioner Seijas noted there could be a potential setback in the Subcommittee's timeframes as hiring a consultant required an open competitive bid process.

Co-Chairman Lowell asked that the General Services Administration prepare a timeline for a renovation plan for the proposed diversion facility and to research ownership of the property. He also asked that the County Attorney research land use issues relating to the subject property.

Mr. Salomon noted he would pursue negotiations with the State regarding the purchase of the SFETC facility in conjunction with Judge Leifman and the County Commission.

Commissioner Seijas exited the meeting prior to discussion by the Subcommittee regarding zoning issues associated with Wackenhut's new facility. She returned to the meeting subsequent to the discussion.

## **VIII. Tasks to be addressed**

Co-Chairman Lowell noted another task to be addressed by the Subcommittee would be updating the abstract on the title and determining through the legislative process, whether the property could be transferred to the County without cost.

Following discussion regarding the County's procurement process, Co-Chairman Lowell suggested deferring further discussion relating to hiring the consultant to the next Subcommittee meeting and obtaining a proposal from the consultant. He noted discussions would be held with representatives from the County Manager's Office to determine whether the County Manager would be amenable to a sole source consulting contract because of the consultant's expertise.

Co-Chairman Lowell concurred with Mr. Wilson Washington's suggestion that the Subcommittee initially set a limitation on the consultant's hours.

Commissioner Seijas suggested the Subcommittee develop a timetable and projected costs for the proposed diversion facility. She also suggested the Subcommittee be aware of the next restructuring of the bond program.

Co-Chairman Lowell suggested the Subcommittee members submit the names of architects/engineers to perform rehabilitation work on the SFETC facility. He noted a Request for Proposal would have to be advertised for the architectural services and undergo the normal County process. Mr. Lowell said timelines would be discussed at the next Subcommittee meeting.

Commissioner Seijas asked Mr. Salomon to review the list of miscellaneous contracts to architects/engineers for Miami International Airport.

Judge Leifman suggested the Subcommittee consider the local architectural firm that built the existing facility.

Mr. Salomon noted while the local architectural firm that built the existing facility might be a good firm, the Subcommittee was limited to the amount of money that could be spent on a consultant.

Responding to Mr. Buchbinder's comments regarding funding for operation of the proposed diversion facility, Judge Leifman said part of the operational process was dependent on the Legislature. He suggested the Subcommittee initiate the political process in order to acquire the SFETC building during the upcoming legislative session and obtain operational funds for a Crisis Stabilization Unit and a Short-term Residential Treatment for the proposed diversion facility during the following legislative session.

Co-Chairman Lowell asked that the Subcommittee be provided with a copy of the operating agreement with Geo Care.

#### **IX. Other Subcommittee Recommendations/Items**

Responding to Ms. Diana Salinas' question regarding a potential overlay if a Baker Act court was located within the proposed diversion facility, Judge Leifman indicated this issue would be discussed with the Honorable Maria Korvick, Administrative Judge of the Probate Division, and member of the Executive Committee of the Mayor's Mental Health Task Force.

Mr. Salomon noted the SFETC property required Cabinet approval because it was owned by the State.

Mr. Wilson Washington, Vice-President, CHI, suggested the Subcommittee look at an existing facility in Mississippi which was similar to the proposed diversion facility as a

model. He noted this was a privatized, civil/criminal facility which was operated by Geo Care.

Co-Chairman Lowell said the next Subcommittee meeting would be held within the middle of February and notification would be provided.

### **Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the Mental Health Diversion Subcommittee, the meeting was adjourned at 11:51 a.m.